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Review of *Workfare: Why Good Ideas Go Bad*. Maeve Quaid. Reviewed by Colita Nichols Fairfax.

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around adaptation, indigenization efforts, and the impact of the global market economy. Cornely shares his experiences in contending with a climate of oppression, and Jakobsson reveals the horrors and difficulties of work in refugee camps.

A universal message from these 15 is the importance of professional involvements. All have been deeply involved in national and international organizations in social work and social welfare. They have used these involvements to contribute to social policy and to the refinement of social work education and knowledge, and they all noted the enhanced meaning these involvements have given to their lives including the important professional friendships that resulted. As internationalists, many express the value of international contact; as Kendall puts it, "whatever we do in social work has to be more community, internationally and globally oriented" (p. 159).

The collection would have been enhanced by the selection of additional representatives from practice. To the extent possible, additional probing would have resulted in more satisfying answers to some of the questions. The questions that solicited lists of awards and accomplishments yielded less interesting material and therefore should have been minimized.

On balance, however, readers will find much that is inspirational in *Faithful Angels*. The book makes a significant contribution through its message that social work leaders exist in all parts of the world, and that wisdom and practice innovations are widely distributed. Valuable historical information is documented through the collection of these 15 life stories. Hopefully, it will stimulate additional research on the worldwide history of the social work profession.

Lynne M. Healy
University of Connecticut

Maeve Quaid, *Workfare: Why Good Ideas Go Bad*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002. \$60.00 hardcover, \$24.95 paper-cover.

Canadian scholar, Maeve Quaid, provides an insightful, forthright account regarding the politics of social policy, particularly

social welfare policy. Her book makes a novel and splendid contribution to the body of literature called implementation analysis. She shows that social policies are often based on good ideas, but that people are rarely concerned with the implementation of good ideas. The 'good idea' of workfare, Quaid points out, is an example of how social policies are politicized by deceiving people that these 'good ideas' will magically transform entrenched societal problems.

Quaid defines workfare as a policy that obliges the welfare recipient to engage in training or public work in order to receive benefits. Workfare is any range of programs from a voluntary employment enhancement program to mandatory participation in a work/school/training program. Workfare was to be an improvement of the welfare reform movement leading to President Clinton's 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA). As examples of her thesis, Quaid examines three states (California, Wisconsin and New York) and three Canadian jurisdictions (New Brunswick, Alberta and Ontario) to demonstrate the similarities in philosophy and implementation of workfare.

Her study asks why are people forced into more training, when it has been proven that government past training so rarely improves the earnings or job prospects of welfare clients? To answer this question, Quaid introduces a force-field analytic model drawn from implementation research. The model demonstrates how behaviors on behalf of key groups of actors in the social policy process may cause the demise of the good idea. An example is found in the case of California, where evaluators' ambiguous results compromised the administrative policies of its GAIN program. Quaid's model of assessing program implementation shows the pitfalls associated with major policy initiatives. The analytic force-field model identifies the key players associated with any policy 'good idea'. They are the politicians, policy-makers, administrators, target group (welfare recipients), evaluators, and the general public (lobby groups, media, taxpayers). Each player has a role in how a policy will affect society. Another example she provides is that politicians often collude with administrators to implement 'the good idea'. She identifies six hazards that undermine policies, these are; the politician hazard, the policy-maker

hazard, the administrator hazard, the target-group hazard, the evaluator hazard, and the public hazard.

A critical aspect of Quaid's argument is that a good idea emerges from popular social beliefs. Welfare reform initiatives the United States since the 1988 Family Support Act all seemed to introduce something which the public found it convincing! This, the author points out, must be understood in terms of the prevailing ideology of the time. Since the 1980s, the ideological environment has supported an aggressive attack on 'mutual obligation' which characterized social policy since the New Deal. Ideologically, many supported the idea of getting welfare recipients off the welfare rolls and into permanent employment.

Canada's concept of workfare vacated a 1966 long-standing 50% federal/provincial cost-sharing agreement known as the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP). CAP dictated that the only condition for welfare eligibility was financial need. CAP was replaced by the Canada Health and Social Transfer in 1996, leaving provinces with more discretion as to how their welfare system would be managed through use of workfare. The dissolution of the CAP has financially impacted provinces since the 50% cost-sharing arrangements no longer exists. Quaid explains that reform of the welfare state in Canada transformed a system based strictly on financial need to one that is conditional on the performance of some voluntary or mandatory work-related activity, a philosophy shared by the United States.

The core of Quaid's study is a comparison of six jurisdictions which sought to determine how effectively workfare has been implemented. She provided a summary of the design of each program, administrative challenges, evaluator's comments, participation rates of recipients and roles of the public. Quaid's findings ranged from administrator's pretending there were appreciable results when there were none, welfare recipients shuffled from training program to training program without achieving desired career paths, administrative confusion over child-care subsidies, lack of tracking of clients. The findings also provided little proof that thousands of people had left welfare, that relationships between workers and clients became adversarial rather than supportive, nonexistent policy and procedures manuals, and, recipient recruitment, selection and orientation executed too quickly

without emphasis placed on the criteria of participants likelihood of success. Her analysis illustrates how a proposed good idea in policy language becomes tarnished as it is implemented.

Quaid's study is an important one for exposing many of the myths about welfare to work programs. By using implementation analysis to show 'good ideas' fail to be translated into effective social policies, her book makes an important contribution. It also provides helpful insights into understanding how policy relates to practice. Although the case studies are somewhat detailed, her book is instructive in showing how policy relates to practice and how it is implemented in the real world. It deserves to be widely read.

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Judith S. Modell, *A Sealed and Sacred Kinship: The Culture of Policies and Practices in American Adoption*. New York: Berghahn, 2002. \$49.95 hardcover.

A Sealed and Secret Kinship by Judith Modell, provides an intriguing, highly-readable overview of American attitudes toward adoption, foster care, and parenting in general. Such a discussion is relevant for a nation with approximately 500,000 children in out-of-home care, a statistic no policy maker or child advocate finds acceptable. The public is dismayed by tales of children in a world of hurt, such as the recent horrific story of three New Jersey children, one of them dead, locked in a small room for months—and the responsible party was a "foster" parent who was overseeing the children while their mother was incarcerated.

Modell's asserts that some societies assume corporate responsibility for children. In traditional Hawaiian culture, parents "gift" their children to others, and neither birth parents, substitute parents, or children experience social recriminations. That is not the case in mainstream American society, where foster parents are paid child care staff (assumed by many to be motivated by money), and foster children are perceived to be waifs or "bad kids" dressed in cast-off clothes and probably on their way to prison or other unfortunate ends.